United Nations A/63/141

General Assembly

Distr.: General
26 June 2008

Original: English

Sixty-third session

Request for the inclusion of an item in the provisional agenda of the sixty-third session

Observer status for the South Centre

Letter dated 19 June 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Tanzania to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of the United Republic of Tanzania to the United Nations has the honour to request, pursuant to rule 13 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the inclusion in the provisional agenda of the sixty-third session of the General Assembly of an additional item, entitled "Observer status for the South Centre".

The request is made on behalf of the Executive Director of the South Centre.

An explanatory memorandum (annex I) in support of the above request and a draft resolution (annex II) are attached to the present letter pursuant to rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

I also have the honour to request that the present letter be circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Augustine P. **Mahiga**
Ambassador

08-40210 (E) 010708

Annex I

Explanatory memorandum

1. The South Centre is an intergovernmental organization of developing countries (currently with 51 member States), with its offices in Geneva. The 1994 Intergovernmental Agreement to Establish the South Centre is currently deposited with the Secretary-General pursuant to his treaty depository functions under the Charter of the United Nations. A copy of the Agreement, as well as other information about the South Centre, is available from the South Centre website at http://www.southcentre.org.

2. According to the Agreement, the South Centre has the following among its central objectives:

- To promote South solidarity, South consciousness and mutual knowledge and understanding among the countries and peoples of the South;
- To promote various types of South-South cooperation and action, South-South links, networking and information exchange;
- To contribute to South-wide collaboration in promoting common interests and coordinated participation by developing countries in international forums dealing with South-South and North-South matters, as well as with other global concerns;
- To foster convergent views and approaches among countries of the South with respect to global economic, political and strategic issues related to evolving concepts of development, sovereignty and security;
- To contribute to better mutual understanding and cooperation between the South and the North on the basis of equity and justice for all, and to this end to the democratization and strengthening of the United Nations and its family of organizations.

3. Broadly, the Centre works to assist in developing the points of view of the South on major policy issues relating to, inter alia, trade, innovation and access to knowledge (including intellectual property), global governance, financing for development, labour and employment (including migration), and environment. Through its policy research, the South Centre seeks to generate ideas and action-oriented proposals for consideration by developing country Governments, institutions for South-South cooperation, intergovernmental organizations of the South, multilateral institutions, developed country partners, and non-governmental organizations and the global community at large.

4. The South Centre also seeks to foster improved North-South dialogue and interaction on a fair and equitable basis on key global issues in the belief that a mutual spirit of cooperation and understanding on common global problems is required for common global action thereon. In order to meet those objectives, and within the limits of its capacity and mandate, the Centre also seeks to respond to requests for policy advice and technical support from developing countries in the context of international negotiations and discussions in various international forums such as the World Trade Organization, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), and various bodies and specialized agencies of the United Nations system such as the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Human Rights Council and the Economic and Social Council

5. The South Centre currently has observer status with the Economic and Social Council, pursuant to Council decision 2006/244. It also has observer status in other specialized agencies and organizations of the United Nations system such as WIPO, UNCTAD and the World Trade Organization.

6. The South Centre's three current substantive programmes relate substantively to the major areas of work of the United Nations and the agenda of the General Assembly. The global governance for development programme undertakes policy research and provides technical support to developing countries in the areas of global institutional governance, financing for development and environment, with the objective of supporting the ability of the global system for multilateral governance and cooperation in those areas to support the development objectives of developing countries in an integrated manner; the trade for development programme supports, through policy research and technical advice, developing countries in international and regional trade negotiations, covering a broad range of thematic areas of work including trade in agricultural goods, trade in services, trade in non-agricultural goods, commodities and economic diversification; and the innovation and access to knowledge and intellectual property programme seeks to bring economic, political legal, scientific and related research, as well as policy analysis, to bear on the ongoing debate and formulation of policy responses to the development challenges facing developing countries including the least developed countries with respect to knowledge and technology. The aim is to contribute to the development, coordinated use and/or improvement of the capacities of these countries and their institutions to integrate the development dimension into their policies on innovation, access to knowledge and intellectual property.

7. The South Centre considers the United Nations to be one of its major partners, especially in the context of promoting and supporting the development objectives and aspirations of the South. In that regard, the work of the General Assembly, as the highest governing body of the United Nations, is of great relevance to the South and, therefore, of prime importance to the South Centre.

Annex II

Draft resolution

Observer status for the South Centre in the General Assembly

The General Assembly,

Wishing to promote cooperation between the United Nations and the South Centre,

1. *Decides* to invite the South Centre to participate in the sessions and work of the General Assembly in the capacity of observer;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take the necessary action to implement the present resolution.

United Nations A/63/142

General Assembly

Distr.: General
14 July 2008

Original: English

Sixty-third session

Request for the inclusion of a sub-item in the provisional agenda of the sixty-third session

Review and appraisal of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons

Note verbale dated 7 July from the Permanent Mission of the Philippines to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of the Philippines to the United Nations, on behalf of the sponsors of General Assembly resolution 62/127, presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to draw the attention of the General Committee to paragraph 14 of resolution 62/127, entitled "Implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons: realizing the Millennium Development Goals for persons with disabilities", which states:

> "*Decides* that the fifth review and appraisal of the World Programme of Action, to be conducted by the General Assembly in 2008, shall direct special attention to the issues raised in the present resolution".

In order to carry out this directive, the Philippines proposes, pursuant to rule 13 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the inclusion in the provisional agenda of the sixty-third session, under the item entitled "Social development", of a sub-item entitled "Review and appraisal of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons".

Furthermore, the Philippines would like to request that this proposal be circulated to all delegations for their information.

08-42190 (E) 140708

United Nations A/63/143

General Assembly

Distr.: General
17 July 2008
English
Original: English and Spanish

Sixty-third session

Request for the inclusion of an item in the provisional agenda of the sixty-third session

Observer status for the Agency for International Trade Information and Cooperation in the General Assembly

Letter dated 17 July from the Permanent Representative of Paraguay to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to request, pursuant to rule 13 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the inclusion in the provisional agenda of the sixty-third session of the Assembly of an item entitled "Observer status for the Agency for International Trade Information and Cooperation in the General Assembly".

This request is made by the Republic of Paraguay with the support of the following States: Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mali, Mongolia, Nepal and Senegal.

In accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, an explanatory memorandum (annex I) in support of the above request and a draft resolution (annex II) are attached to the present letter.

I also have the honour to request that the present letter be circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Eladio **Loizaga**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

08-42841 (E) 170708

Annex I

Explanatory memorandum

1. Historical background

1. The Agency for International Trade Information and Cooperation (AITIC) was established in 2004 as an intergovernmental organization to assist resource-constrained countries to have a more active participation in international trade.

2. Purpose

2. Through the provision of trade-related technical assistance and capacity-building AITIC helps its members to promote trade-led growth. The Agency provides free, personalized assistance, tailored especially to the particular needs for information and analysis concerning trade and development issues. A priority area for AITIC assistance is Africa, although activities also cover the Caribbean, Latin America, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, South-East Asia and the Pacific.

3. Membership

3. As at 31 March 2008, AITIC has 61 members of which seven are sponsoring and 54 are participating members. AITIC is funded by Denmark, Finland, Ireland, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

4. Organizational structure

4. AITIC functions through the Council of Representatives, the Executive Board and a Secretariat headed by an Executive Director:

(a) The Council of Representatives, consisting of representatives of the sponsoring and the participating members, is the decision-making organ;

(b) The Executive Board consists of three members each from the sponsoring and participating members and, ex officio, the Executive Director;

(c) The Secretariat:

(i) Manages the day-to-day operations of AITIC as staff management in accordance with the staff regulations;

(ii) Submits proposals for the annual work programme, budget and report on AITIC activities for consideration by the Board and approval by the Council;

(iii) Submits to the Board and the Council an independently audited statement of receipts and expenditures related to the budget during the preceding fiscal period;

(iv) Represents AITIC externally;

(d) The annual accounts and financial statements are audited by an External Auditor.

5. Finance

5. The regular annual budget of AITIC is funded by the sponsoring members. Other voluntary contributions in cash or in kind are encouraged from sponsoring and participating members, Governments, and other intergovernmental agencies or private sponsors, in accordance with the provisions of the Agency's financial regulations.

6. Activities

6. The Agency's assistance to its participating members and other resource-constrained countries with priority to the least developed countries includes: organization of seminars, training sessions, workshops and meetings (in some cases, in collaboration with other institutions); preparation of background notes, information briefs and ad hoc documents prepared on demand on topics relating to international trade and development. The Agency provides assistance in the three official languages of the World Trade Organization (WTO) (English, French and Spanish).

7. AITIC extends support to those countries that cannot afford to establish and maintain a permanent representation at Geneva. Assisting officials from these "non-resident" countries is one of the Agency's main functions; to this effect, AITIC created the Non-Residents' Unit in October 2000. AITIC provides the "non-residents" with constant information on trade-related developments through briefing notes and background information. To those that decide to set up a mission at Geneva, AITIC also provides logistical support and temporary office space during the process.

8. The Agency's current focus is on the main areas under negotiation in WTO: agriculture, industrial goods, services, rules and trade facilitation. Other activities are related to technical assistance on sanitary and phytosanitary measures, technical barriers to trade, WTO accessions, regionalism, trade policy reviews and promotion of public-private sector partnerships. Other development-related areas where AITIC is currently working and offering assistance are implementation of the Aid for Trade and Enhanced Integrated Framework initiatives and economic partnership agreements.

7. Relations with other organizations

9. AITIC has observer status in the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Conference on WTO of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

10. AITIC has signed a number of memorandums of understanding with its international partners, UNCTAD, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States and the International Law Institute to enable closer and more active collaboration.

11. AITIC has a close working relationship with other institutions, such as WTO, the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States of the United Nations Secretariat, the International Trade Centre, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the ACP Group of States and the Agence intergouvernementale de la Francophonie, as well as with academic institutions and the private sector.

8. Reasons for seeking observer status for AITIC

12. In keeping with United Nations Millennium Development Goal 8 and the aspirations of the WTO Doha Work Programme, AITIC assists the less-advantaged countries to have more effective trade policies and thus achieve poverty reduction through accelerated economic development. AITIC believes that the Aid for Trade and Enhanced Integrated Framework initiatives can be powerful tools for reaching these goals.

13. Trade and development-related issues are being discussed in forums other than WTO or UNCTAD. The international trade debate goes beyond the traditional and conventional economic or legal aspects. The effects of trade are being increasingly viewed in other contexts, such as climate change and environment, industrial development, social aspects (such as its relation to human rights and gender), health, labour, migration, energy, etc. At the same time, the analyses have become more specialized as regards trade's impact on different country groupings: least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small and vulnerable economies, among others.

14. Different United Nations organizations — World Health Organization, UNCTAD, Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing States and Small Island Developing States, WIPO, International Labour Organization, World Meteorological Organization, World Customs Organization, Economic and Social Council, United Nations Environment Programme, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Development Programme and UNIDO — deal with these issues and country groupings as part of their core mandate, and each provides its own particular focus and perspective. Most of the organizations are branches of the United Nations. There is, therefore, a need for an organization engaged in providing trade-related technical assistance like AITIC to observe, study and analyse the relevant aspects of their activities, establish linkages and obtain comprehensive information. Being able to follow directly these debates and meetings, which the General Assembly views in unison, would be extremely valuable to AITIC. To keep track of them would assist it to better fulfil its own mandate and serve its members.

15. Being granted observer status in the United Nations General Assembly would boost the capacity of AITIC to cooperate with other United Nations agencies involved in poverty reduction and, hence, would allow AITIC to better fulfil its mandate.

9. Address

Agency for International Trade Information and Cooperation
Rue de Varembé 9
P.O. Box 156
1211 Geneva 20
Switzerland
website: http://www.aitic.org

10. Head of the Agency

Esperanza Duran
Executive Director

Annex II

Draft resolution

Observer status for the Agency for International Trade Information and Cooperation in the General Assembly

The General Assembly,

Wishing to promote cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency for International Trade Information and Cooperation,

1. *Decides* to invite the Agency for International Trade Information and Cooperation to participate in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly in the capacity of observer;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take the necessary action to implement the present resolution.